



Photos by Tech. Sgt. Steve Goetsch  
Maj. Darren Easton, 37th Helicopter Flight Commander, welcomes members of the 40th Helicopter Flight from Malmstrom AFB, Mont., to Warren as part of relief efforts.



Ole Silva, Phase Dock Chief, 54th Helicopter Flight, Minot AFB, performs required maintenance in preparation for Saturday's departure in support of Hurricane Rita relief.

# Twentieth Air Force aids in Hurricane Rita relief efforts

**Tech. Sgt. Steven Goetsch**  
*90th Space Wing Public Affairs*

Twentieth Air Force deployed aircrew and support personnel from its three bases to support relief efforts in hurricane-stricken areas of Texas and Louisiana Saturday morning.

"We responded with a substantial effort to assist in the relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina," said Maj. Gen. Frank Klotz, Twentieth Air Force Commander. "Our support to assist in Hurricane Rita relief efforts will be no different. We are sending helicopters and some of our very best Airmen to provide support to the relief effort in any way we can."

The group departed Warren Saturday and reached Ellington Field, Texas Monday.

Six UH-1N "Huey" helicopters, two each from Warren, Minot AFB, N.D. and Malmstrom AFB, Mont., as well as approximately 70 aircrew and support personnel were sent to assist with search and rescue, and relief efforts.

As of Sentinel press time, the

team had completed grid searches to evaluate damage and identify people who needed rescuing. Fortunately, no rescues were necessary.

The support personnel are made up of maintenance, logistics and medical Airmen who are excited to be a part of this relief effort.

"I didn't get a chance to deploy to JTF Katrina and it really got to me. I'm really excited I get the chance to go now," said Airman 1st Class Chris Smith, 54th HF. "Even though you serve your country by wearing the uniform, it's great to see you're helping people, face to face."

The teams are better prepared because of lessons learned from JTF Katrina. Preparation went very smoothly, said Airman 1st Class Amanda Orahoud, 40th HF. "We were ready to go literally just waiting on the 'go' order."

Embedded with the team are media from CBS Channel 5 Cheyenne and Wyoming Public Radio. They have filed daily reports to keep the community informed of 20th Air Force efforts.



Airman 1st Class Amanda Orahoud, 40th Helicopter Flight, Malmstrom AFB, Mont., fills out maintenance forms after landing at Warren.

